



# LOUISVILLE DOWNTOWN Revitalization Team **ACTION PLAN**



# FOREWORD

This Action Plan showcases the work of a 100+ member team of Louisvillians committed to accelerating downtown Louisville's recovery following 15 months of the COVID-19 pandemic, including social justice protests, both of which changed our collective lives in downtown.

On January 14, 2021, Mayor Greg Fischer announced the creation of the Downtown Revitalization Team at his annual State of the City address, laying out some of the hopes, challenges, and opportunities in the new year ahead. Mayor Fischer called on Louisvillians to reimagine, revitalize, and restore downtown to a thriving and inclusive place for residents, employers, and tourists. The Team is a diverse group of business owners, industry leaders, residents, and community partners who came together in six committees over the course of six months to tackle some of downtown's most challenging problems.

After agreeing to a charter which guided the formation of this Action Plan, committees met at least twice a month, first in small break out groups to discuss issues ranging from public safety, vacant and underutilized office space, tourism, arts & culture, diversity, equity & inclusion, small businesses, downtown residents, and the messaging and perception of downtown. During the second monthly meetings, committee leaders shared the ideas that had emerged during committee discussion, committee goals, and the action steps needed to be taken to move from concept to reality. As the depth of work increased, so did the cross-collaboration across committees, which was anchored by the guidance of the project Steering Committee, a group of twelve dedicated community leaders.

Downtown is everyone's neighborhood. The Downtown Revitalization Team's guiding principle was to envision and create a downtown environment that is *even better* than it was before. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) goals are critical to the process and extend through the work of the entire Action Plan, which calls upon Louisvillians to acknowledge the systemic racism in our community, and to understand what kind of changes we need to make so that everyone feels like an essential part of, and is welcome, in downtown.

The following Plan is a set of recommendations, some of which already are happening and are funded, and are indicated as such, and some of which are eligible for American Rescue Plan stimulus funds. Louisville Metro's Recommended FY22 Budget includes \$14.5 million of projects in downtown, including \$8 million for Waterfront Park Phase IV. Additional city funds may be available. In addition to the city projects, the Action Plan reflects more than \$13 million in other recommendations.

An advisory group will continue to work with the city and Louisville Downtown Partnership staff to focus on prioritizing and implementing recommendations as funding is secured.

The aspirations and actions set in motion this year will impact generations of Louisvillians to come. As this Plan underscores, the Downtown Revitalization Team is strongly committed to ushering in a new era of downtown that is vibrant, clean, safe, equitable, and inclusive, and invites all of Louisville to be a part of this effort.

# Downtown Revitalization TEAM MEMBERS

## PROJECT SPONSORS

**Mayor Greg Fischer**

**Rebecca Fleischaker**

Co-Chief of Louisville Forward, Director of the Department of Economic Development

**Jeff O'Brien**

Co-Chief of Louisville Forward, Director of Develop Louisville

**Louisville Downtown Partnership**

## PROJECT STAFF

**Andrea C. Brown**

Deputy Director, Department of Economic Development

**LuTisha Buckner**

Economic Development Assistant, Department of Economic Development

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Douglas Edwards, Co-Chair

Mariah Gratz, Co-Chair

Doug Owen

Tawana Bain

Cleo Battle

Sarah Davasher-Wisdom

Gabriell Gassaway

Councilman Jecorey Arthur

Matthew Ayers

Nachand Trabue

Ted Smith

Dan Hartlage

## COMMITTEE STAFF

April Arnold

Michael King

Rachel Casey

Claire Yates

Logan Gatti

# Downtown Revitalization TEAM MEMBERS

Councilwoman Donna Purvis  
Councilman Anthony Piagentini  
Councilman Mark Fox  
Teddy Abrams  
Jim Allen  
Mark C. Bacon  
Jim Baines  
Ben Baker  
Kim Baker  
Theresa Carpenter Beames  
Amanda Bean  
David Beck  
Deborah Bilitski  
Neil Blumberg  
Christen Boone  
Justin Booth  
Kendall Boyd  
Vanessa Burns  
Jamie Campisano  
Nick Campisano  
Chris Cieminiski  
Lamont Collins  
Devan Cortland  
Roger Cude  
Antuan DelCarpio  
Mo Deljoo  
Mayor Bill Dieruf  
Julie Donna  
JD Dotson  
Laura Douglas  
Gary Dryden  
John Duffy  
Youness El Mesyah

Will Ford  
Eric Friggle  
Dr. Kevin Gardner  
David Green  
Kaniya Harris  
Natalie Harris  
Chanelle Helm  
Blake Henry  
Chester Hicks  
Derreck Hughes  
Vincent James  
Anne Jewell  
Quinton Johnson "DJ John Q"  
Tina Jones  
Valle Jones  
Mayor Bonnie Jung  
Frank Kalmbach  
Deana Karem  
Prewitt Lane  
Terra Leavell  
Boz Lindgren  
Dr. Mellone Long  
Robert Lush  
Ken Marshall  
Shauntrice Martin  
Blair McBride  
Weeks McKinney-Smith  
LMPD Major Matt Meagher  
Marty Merkel  
Britney Ruby Miller  
Stan Moore  
Molly Muldoon  
Tim Mulloy

Rick Murphy  
Sabeen Nasim  
Tom Payette  
Alonzo Ramont  
Laurie Anne Roberts  
Gabriel Robinson  
Katie Meinhardt Rouster  
Jennifer Rubenstein  
Karl Schmitt  
Mike Schnell  
Heath Seymour  
Jesten Slaw  
Evon Smith  
LMPD Lt. Caleb Stewart  
Louis R. Straub, II  
Christine Tarquinio  
Colleen Thomas  
George Timmering  
Mayor Rick Tonini  
Andy Treinen  
Robbie Valentine  
Gabriele Vincenzo  
Janet Warner  
Bryan Warren  
Kwane Watson  
Reed Weinberg  
Geoff White  
Michelle White  
Jim Wilson  
Richard Wilson  
Philip Yon  
Christopher Yost

# Downtown Revitalization Team RECOMMENDATIONS



In order to organize the wide range of recommendations that came out of the committees, and to help the Advisory Group continue the work of the Downtown Revitalization Team, recommendations are listed in time ranges of ability to execute. These are shown as short-term (30 days), mid-term (60-90 days), and longer-term (120+ days) goals.

Red arrows indicate that the project has known funding at the time of the writing of this Plan and is under way. The entity listed in parentheses after each item is the goal owner.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Plan collaborative efforts between the Arts & Culture Alliance, the Louisville Metro Council Arts & Culture Committee and the Fund for the Arts to create events for 2022 that is reflective of Louisville's racial and cultural demographics

## Clean, Green & Safe

- \$250,000 – Streetlight replacement (Metro)
- \$230,000 – Sidewalk repairs (Metro)
- \$40,000 – additional downtown wastebaskets (Metro)
- Reduced garage rooftop monthly parking through September (PARC/Metro)

## Commercial Occupiers

- \$1,750 (\$350/cleanup) – Sponsor 5 monthly downtown clean-up days (Brightside/Louisville Downtown Partnership (LDP))
- Enforce permits for utility road construction to non-rush hour times; and develop a plan to including restriction from blocking multiple lanes and from having simultaneous projects on major downtown arteries (LDP)
- Create a PSA/advertising campaign to discourage public from giving money to panhandlers; provide alternative giving resources (LDP)
- Research best practices of safety and communication programs in other cities (LDP-BbB)

## Events

- \$75,000/2 – Louisville Orchestra free outdoor concert – May 22, COMPLETE (Metro)
- Released open call for Proposals (highly recommending 9 of 26 submissions for outdoor activations, art installations, etc. in public/private spaces) – COMPLETE



### Marketing & Communications

- Continue to promote Lou Needs You campaign and utilize #LouNeedsYou, #LiveInLou, #DowntownStrong, and #DowntownLouNeedsU on social media content
  - Execute on any available media buys, pending budget available (GLI as lead)
  - Social Media campaign
    - Identify influencers and events as “hooks” to expand Lou Needs You promotion
    - Coordinate content development with the other committees, downtown businesses and residents
    - Visit [LouNeedsYou.com](http://LouNeedsYou.com) for logo assets and to download a social media profile icon
- Committee members use and share media campaigns and reach out to 20 businesses to solicit participation

### Residential Occupiers

- Launch and implement residential social media campaign around “what’s in my back yard”
- Lobby for more diverse artist events

### Small Business

- Nulu Sidewalk Sashays – every 2nd Saturday through September (Nulu Business Association)
- MELANnaire Marketplace (Black-owned business pop-up mall) – every 3rd Saturday at 4th Street Live! May-October (Manhattan on Broadway)

### Tourism

- Relaunch Cultural Pass program; expand with other attractions; engage a greater number of families (in areas of the city where barriers around access – language, finances, and transportation – exist), which will bring more school-age children downtown. Focus on schools, community centers (Metro)
- Update and reprint Hospitality Maps to be printed for hotels/attractions, and update online map information – COMPLETE (LDP)
- Grand Opening of 101 Roots Museum (June 12)



# Downtown Revitalization Team RECOMMENDATIONS



60-90 DAYS

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Create a comprehensive evaluation and reporting process that measures and tracks the status of various DE&I efforts; initial findings to serve as a baseline for annual report
  - Downtown Louisville businesses; inclusive of types of jobs, salary earnings, types of businesses, revenue, types of events, attendance, etc. (LDP/HRC)
  - ADA accessibility; assess ADA offerings downtown (i.e., curb cuts, etc.) and create a plan to ensure downtown is more ADA accessible by 2022 (Metro)
  - Downtown residents; a housing needs assessment of residents, including those who are experiencing houselessness, and existing and potential downtown residential locations
- Create an annual legislative agenda in collaboration with downtown elected officials to suggest permanent ways to make downtown more diverse, equitable and inclusive through local ordinances and resolutions (LDP)
- Create accessible guidelines for multicultural community partners to offer cultural/ethnic events for holidays and celebrations to create an awareness and appreciation of global communities (Metro - Globalization)
- Create a comprehensive educational experience focusing on downtown's history of segregation using digital platforms, empty buildings, historical markers, window displays, events, etc. to further promote the patronizing of Black-owned businesses (Metro/Filson/ Tourism)
- Partner with Goodwill Another Way program for people experiencing houselessness to integrate into downtown employment

## Clean, Green & Safe

- \$1.4 million – River Road multi-modal construction and additional lighting (including Riverwalk) between 3rd and 7th Streets (Metro)
- \$500,000 – scooter/bike lanes (Metro)
- Utility restoration repaving (Metro)
- Evaluate options for creating temporary or permanent houseless shelter spaces (Metro)
- Reduced garage rooftop monthly parking through September (PARC/Metro)
- \$300,000 – Hire 5 additional BID Hospitality ambassadors (\$52,000/person all-in) – (LDP)

## 60-90 DAYS CONTINUED

### Commercial Occupiers

- \$1,000,000 – Activate 10 vacant first floor spaces (e.g., retailer, maker space) (avg. \$40/sf for 2,500 sf)
- Develop communications to recruit retail/street-level small businesses (focus on Black-owned businesses)
- \$5,000 – Sponsor 2-day Diversity Career Fair to fill 20 downtown jobs earning at least \$39,000 with Black job seekers by encouraging employers to be more intentional and actively recruit to reflect the racial makeup of Louisville (June 26-27)
- \$1,000,000 – Create “Downtown Dollars” program, for employers and landlords to offer credits to downtown employees to encourage dining and shopping downtown

### Events

- Develop food truck events around downtown locations (e.g., at Waterfront)
- \$1,000,000 PARC revenue recovery – free or reduced parking for DRT events
- \$75,000/2 – Louisville Orchestra free outdoor concert (July 4th weekend) – (Metro)
- Juneteenth Jubilee Celebration (Metro)
- Nulu Fest (June 25) – (Nulu Business Association)
- Released open call for Proposals (recommending 9 of 26 submissions for outdoor activations, art installations, etc. in public/private spaces) – COMPLETE
  - Strongly recommended proposals within the 60-90 day time frame include:
    1. \$150,000 - **Activate Whiskey Alley** free event on W. Washington Street between 1st and 2nd Street one block behind Main Street: Whiskey Alley will activate around local events with the goal of providing fun, exciting and entertaining experiences not only out-of-town visitors whether tourists, concert goers or convention guests - as well as for local patrons. (approx. \$50,000 to be secured in sponsorships)
    2. \$25,000 - **Juneteenth Festival Louisville** free event at the Waterfront: Collaborators include GEDDI, PPATH, The Culture of Money, Sewing Seeds of Faith, Republic Bank, Kentucky Performing Arts, Kentucky Fund for Arts, Recording Arts and Sciences Bootcamp, B 96.5, Kingdom Fellowship Christian Church, No Justice No Peace Choir, Social Justice community, Recording Artists; SZA, HER, Elliot, Ramoux Gang, KMF Band, The Vibe Open Mic, Hannah Drake, Rheonna (Poetry Slam). (\$7,000 secured in sponsorships)

(CONTINUED)



### Events (CONTINUED)

3. \$19,000 - **Broadway Under the Stars** free event at the Waterfront or Christy's Garden bringing together the best singers, dancers, musicians and technicians for shows, vendors, and activities for children and adults to enjoy over the weekends. Collaborators include Pandora Productions, Acting Against Cancer, Waterworks Dance Theater, Faithworks, Bluegrass Production Studio, Lacey Boy Entertainment, Louisville Central Community Center, Russell Place of Promise, and various food vendors.
4. \$50,000 - **The Black Out: Arts Festival on the Belvedere** free, diverse outside summer/fall arts festival highlighting emerging and veteran mixed media Black artists and small black arts organizations within Kentucky. Would provide over 75 black artists of all disciplines (including culinary) a grand platform to promote, demonstrate, perform and sell their art in the downtown area on the Belvedere. Confirmed collaborators: Redline Performing Arts, Healing Walls Project, Lipstick Wars Poetry Slam, Creatives of Color Collective, SpreadLovEnterprises. Potential collaborators: Roots101, AMPED, Arts Thrust, Reed My Words, Louisville Visual Arts, over 50 BIPOC multimedia artists, BuyBlack Lou.
5. \$20,000 - **Sports & Arts Fest** free event at 4th Street Live, a family-friendly experience that provides youth, ages seven to 13, opportunities to participate in numerous sports and arts activities, learn more about the activities they like, and sign up for instruction or leagues, all in one location. Programming areas set up on street level, stretching from Liberty St. to Muhammad Ali. Collaborators include the Louisville Sports Commission, Louisville Metro Community Centers/Metro Parks, Boy & Girls Clubs, Family Scholar House, TKO Boxing, Louisville City FC, Gym Tyme All Stars, U.S. Tennis Association, First Tee, L4 Lacrosse, & Bluegrass Elite Rugby.
6. \$50,000 - **Dance Film Festival** a free summer-long, free film festival hosted outdoors at Louisville Ballet's downtown venue. Event will include commissioning a large scale mural on the building's east wall, investing in screen and projector equipment, partnering with Louisville's food truck vendors, and creating marketing and sponsorship opportunities. Potential collaborators include Louisville Ballet, Gresham Smith, Speed Museum, LIFF, visual/mural artist, Louisville Food Truck Association, Film Freeway, Angels Envy.

## Marketing & Communications

- Continue to promote Lou Needs You campaign and utilize #LouNeedsYou, #LiveInLou, #DowntownStrong, and #DowntownLouNeedsU on social media content
  - Execute on any available media buys, pending budget available (GLI as lead)
  - Social Media campaign
    - Identify influencers and events as “hooks” to expand Lou Needs You promotion
    - Coordinate content development with the other committees, downtown businesses and residents
    - Visit [LouNeedsYou.com](https://LouNeedsYou.com) for logo assets and to download a social media profile icon
- Marketing at downtown events when possible (banners, signage, etc. can be produced pending budget)
- \$2,000 – Create web page to encourage visitors and employees to return downtown, and to generally promote Downtown (LDP) (e.g., <https://chicagoreturns.com>)
- Pitch media outlets for earned media stories (WLKY, WDRB, WHAS, Courier-Journal, NPR).
  - Plan re-launch event for the weekend of June 11: Mask mandates and space restrictions will be relaxed. Plan is to re-launch Downtown with #LouNeedsYou focus. Asking media, businesses, and residents to ramp up activity
  - Provide #LouNeedsYou graphics to any/all Downtown businesses that will utilize them
  - Identify events to promote Downtown
- Integrate safety message into all communications, especially that Ambassadors can share
- Pitch East End Living magazine profile, encouraging residents to Go Downtown to support local businesses (LDP)
- Utilize employers to message the importance of their employees going downtown (LDP)
  - Business may support businesses through incentives (pay for parking, donate \$10 to your purchase, etc.)

## Residential Occupiers

- Downtown Living Tour - June 20 (Downtown Residents Association/LDP)
- Create a monthly coalition of “edge neighborhoods” that can serve as advisors to the Louisville Downtown Residents Assoc. providing input on programming, events and developments. (e.g., Portland, Russell, California, Limerick, Old Louisville, Smoketown, Phoenix Hill, Butchertown) (Louisville Downtown Resident Association)
- \$1,500 – Urban Bourbon Half Marathon - provide drink vouchers for downtown restaurants post half-marathon (Louisville Sports Commission)

## 60-90 DAYS

CONTINUED

### Small Business

- MELANnaire Marketplace (Black owned business pop-up mall) – every 3rd Saturday at 4th Street Live! (May-October)
- \$2,000,000 – Create loan or grant fund to incentivize downtown occupancy, with focus on minority-owned businesses, e.g., incubator/maker space, child care, gym (LDP)

### Tourism

- \$5,000 – Improve Louisville Tourism technology to provide map to events, and link to event page (Louisville Tourism)
- \$17,700 – Improve master calendar of all public and private events, as well as wayfinder event map capability, on Louisville Tourism’s website (Louisville Tourism)
- Contact rideshare companies like Uber, Lyft and TARC to understand how service is added, and create a method to provide subsidized transportation to/from events for “hard to reach” neighborhoods. Contact JCPS to understand the availability of school buses to be used for events

# Downtown Revitalization Team RECOMMENDATIONS



120+ DAYS

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Encourage all downtown entertainment and cultural centers to be more intentional in diversifying content offerings and opportunities for equitable access to events (Consider achieving 5% of capacity for reduced and/or affordable tickets)

## Clean, Green & Safe

- \$2.6 million – two-way conversions on E. Jefferson, 7th, and 8th Streets (Metro)
- \$140,000 – repairs at Louisville Xtreme Park (Metro)
- \$8 million – Waterfront Park Phase IV (Metro)
- Replace and repair broken light and pedestrian crossing fixtures, sewer grates, and other street furniture (Metro)

## Commercial Occupiers

- Evaluate TARC routes to have ample transportation between west Louisville and downtown
- Relaunch Downtown circulator, and encourage expanding into Russell neighborhood (TARC)
- Create Downtown Callbox plan (location, design, installation)
- \$7,500,000 – Provide funds to downtown property owners/managers to convert excess office spaces into more productive uses, assuming demand, such as creative co-working spaces (incentivizing to return to pre-COVID occupancy) – (assuming \$150/sf for construction/fit-out, for 20,000 sf x 2-3 spaces)



## Events

- Free or reduced parking for DRT events
- \$35,000 - Urban Bourbon Half Marathon security to create a safe route and attract participants and spectators for this premier downtown event. (October 16)
- Released open call for Proposals (recommending 9 of 26 submissions for outdoor activations, art installations, etc. in public/private spaces) – COMPLETE
  - Strongly recommended proposals within the 120+ day time frame include:
    1. \$100,000 - **Imagine Mural Festival** free event to showcase local, national, and international artistic talent and Louisville's vibrant neighborhoods. The Imagine Mural Festival brings murals of all scales to a select Louisville neighborhood each year, engaging residents, business owners, and tourists from across Louisville and beyond. Collaborators include the city's Public Art Administrator and COPA, artists (muralists and performing artists), business owners, media and promotional partners, TARC or another bus company, LouVelo or another bike tour company, food trucks for the kickoff and celebration events.
    2. \$500,000 - **Downtown: Performing Arts Returning Home to Downtown** free event of a series of performing artists in locations downtown, beginning late summer/fall, partnering with other local businesses, such as hotels, bars, and restaurants, followed by a larger "block party festival" style event celebrating Louisville's performing arts scene and the vibrancy of downtown in the spring. (Kentucky Performing Arts Foundation, Kentucky Center for Performing Arts, Louisville Ballet, Louisville Orchestra, StageOne Family Theatre, Kentucky Opera, River City Drum Corps, Louisville Leopards, and other community performing arts groups).
    3. \$62,500 - **Black Art Mural Project (BAMP)** Fest free, large-scale mural competition/festival that incorporates visual arts and the Black experience. This event will be hosted in a neighborhood near downtown or in downtown and will include artists performances, vendors, food trucks and more. Collaborators include YUM Brands, Pepsi-Cola, Kentucky Derby Festival, Churchill Downs, Woodford Reserve, Brown Forman, Simmons College, Kentucky State University, Tennessee State University, Spelman College, Howard University, Morehouse College, Florida A & M College, Coca-Cola, Kellogg's, Apple, Microsoft.



### Marketing & Communications

- Continue to promote Lou Needs You campaign and utilize #LouNeedsYou, #LiveInLou, #DowntownStrong, and #DowntownLouNeedsU on social media content
  - Execute on any available media buys, pending budget available (GLI as lead)
  - Social Media campaign
  - Identify influencers and events as “hooks” to expand Lou Needs You promotion
  - Coordinate content development with the other committees, downtown businesses and residents
  - Visit [LouNeedsYou.com](http://LouNeedsYou.com) for logo assets and to download a social media profile icon
- Marketing at downtown events when possible (banners, signage, etc. can be produced pending budget)
- Create marketing subgroup with representatives from GLI, Louisville Tourism, LDP, One Southern Indiana, and Louisville Forward to continue exposure and marketing for Downtown

### Residential Occupiers

- Launch Downtown502Living Plan, a hub for information, including residential listings, event planning, branding, and marketing to support existing downtown residents and attract new residents to downtown (LDP)
- Program to encourage and support developers to create more residential space (LDP)

### Small Business

- Recruit more Black-owned businesses
- MELANnaire Marketplace (Black owned business pop-up mall) – every 3rd Saturday at 4th Street Live! (May-October)

### Tourism

- Study urban planning best practices for redevelopment of surface parking lots, reuse of historic buildings, etc. as a way to attract visitors and investment
- \$15,000 – Develop app for Downtown (walking tour, retailers/restaurants, events)